



Caress those curves like a lover... an ugly lover

This game will be "piling up" in stores Australia wide

Your character has her own "high beams"

# R: RACING

**CAM SHEA** can sum this game up with one word – meh

**Namco, Namco,** wherefore art thou Namco? These are (oddly enough) the words that sprang to mind while playing R:Racing, for this is a game that, although allegedly developed by the Ridge Racer team at Namco, is thoroughly lacking in Namco's racing game smarts.

## BRING BACK THE "IDGE"!

While their shift in emphasis away from drifting towards a more "realistic" driving game where one must come to grips with "braking" is all well and good on paper, there are several other games out there that already do this very well indeed. So what have Namco brought to the table? Very little.

The driving model in particular is very poor. Compared to other recent racing titles (such as V8 2 or PGR 2), R:Racing really can't claim any real level of "simulation"... unless the purported simulation is based on some alternate Earth with completely different physics. The simplistic

nature of the handling is especially evident in some of the real life tracks that Namco have thrown in, like Suzuka and Monaco. Simply put – we know these courses well from other more realistic games, leaving R:Racing's control deficiencies exposed for all to see.

Adding insult to injury, R:Racing's AI seems to hark back to the days of early Ridge Racer titles, whereby your competitors (all five of them) seem to sit in mostly fixed order throughout races. This is especially noticeable when your (large breasted) female rival is introduced in the Racing Life mode. Since she's your (large breasted) rival, she always has the lead. There's nothing more soul destroying than for the artifact of a game to be so clearly on display. The trick of a good game is to make things seem realistic; to make it seem like the other cars are jostling for positions, to make the other drivers seem

competent but ultimately fallible. R:Racing simply doesn't succeed at this, and it's mildly insulting for Namco to think that a product of this quality will suffice.

Then again, some gamers will be happy just to get to the next cut scene

in Racing Life mode, to see the next close up shot of your (large breasted) rival having a go at your (moderate bosomed) character. Yes, there's a story. Yes,

it's irrelevant. Even worse, the 14 chapters of this mode are structured so that you essentially have no decisions to make. Hell, there isn't even any tension or consequence for performing poorly (hello retry!).

To be fair, R:Racing has a few different styles of driving available, and a reasonable Event Challenge mode where you can unlock a wide range of cars, but again, there's nothing here that hasn't been done better elsewhere. <<

**!!!** The GameCube version comes bundled with multiplayer Pac-Man Vs. You tell us which is the superior game...

AVAILABLE ON:  
PS2 / XBOX / GCN / PC

DETAILS  
CATEGORY: Racing / PLAYERS: 1-2 / DEVELOPER: Namco / PUBLISHER: EA / PRICE: \$89.95 / RATING: G / AVAILABLE: Now /

HYPHER VERDICT  
**PLUS:** Licensed vehicles, music.

**MINUS:** Slow, bad driving model, grainy visuals.

VISUALS 75 SOUND 80 GAMEPLAY 55

OVERALL  
**63**

Worth a look for racing and Pac-Man fans who own GameCubes and GBAs...